

THE

14
HARPER'S FERRY INSURRECTION:

BEING AN ACCOUNT OF THE LATE

OUTBREAK IN VIRGINIA,

AND OF THE

TRIAL AND EXECUTION

OF

CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN, ITS HERO.

BY

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EDINBURGH:

MYLES MACPHAIL, 11 ST. DAVID STREET.

GLASGOW: THOMAS MURRAY & SON.

LONDON: SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, & CO.

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P R E F A C E.

The following brief memorial of the events which, though in one sense trifling, lately caused the very foundation of the America Union to shake, is little more than a plain account of them, derived from a careful consideration of the newspaper accounts and conversations with some of the parties connected with the affair. In thus embodying them into a narrative, and sending them forth upon the public, it is presumed that but few of the particulars are known, and that there are some who would like to know them in full. To such we would say, that we hope they too may be incited to do something towards securing the coloured man's freedom and manhood in America—if not in the way Brown attempted to do so, in one against which they can have no conscientious scruples—by sending through some of the anti-slavery societies that exist throughout this country, contributions to keep in a good state of repair and more active service the under-ground railroad that is the means of emancipating thousands yearly.

J. E. G.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE summer was just ended, but the autumn leaves had not yet fallen upon the earth, which was still warm with the heat of the preceding season, when, after an absence of three years, the writer of the following pages landed once more on his native shores, the American. Sir Walter Scott in his Lay, says—

“Breathes there a man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said—
This is my own, my native land.”

I am that man, for never have I felt, never can I feel, that patriotic sentiment towards America which the poet speaks of; but before those who read this avowal pass the poet's doom upon me, let me tell the reason why this is the case as briefly as possible. It so happened that nature gave me a coloured skin, and on account of this, from infancy up to the time I left America, 18 years, I had to grasp the cold, flinty hand, of what in America was a misfortune punishable as a crime. He who knows not what American prejudice is (and none can fully know except those who have felt it, which is a privilege only *enjoyed* by an unfavoured many), cannot know what is implied in the above sentence. It is to feel the world cold and unfriendly as soon as you have gained any knowledge of it; it is to have the dews which alight on life's path evaporated by a precocious, mischievous sun as soon as they have fallen; to have youth's sparkling fountain rendered insipid and impure, and manhood's dry or filthy. In short, it is to have life drawn out into innumerable threads by a fell demon who sports with them, and ever and anon, by chance or otherwise, mostly the latter, breaks one. I had suffered this, and I need not say that I was glad to escape a country in which I could not rise to the sovereignty of a man, and to flee to one consecrated not only by the genius of Universal Emancipation, but also by those Christian sentiments that prompt its people to extend their hands to the oppressed of all countries.

It will now be seen why, on entering America again, I felt not patriotic sentiments, but rather feelings of shame, that I had received in another country the kind feeling I should have found in my own. Such is America in the north, though in some States we find this feeling of prejudice less strong than in others, while in one or two there is scarcely any. To the traveller especially, who had just ended a voyage

of 14 days, America looked beautiful in the light of a fine day in early autumn; but it was only the beauty of a sarcophagus, its face was fair, but its heart was possessed by a demon. Far away, in the more sunny south at that moment might have been seen millions of human creatures debased into chattel, toiling their very life out for so called masters, under a penalty, at times, worse than of death. The influence of the slave power moves in a strong tide-wave over the length and breadth of America; and though occasionally it is checked in its course, it still moves on and on, baneful to all, alike to those who feel its power and to those against whom it is directed. Though the blood of Sumner cried out in stentorian tones from the Senate Chamber, it was not sufficient to save Kansas; and California—ah, shame on thee, California! Thy golden mountains and precious sands will not save thee, nor shall the brightest gems that nestle beneath the bosoms of thy feather and thy tuba hide thee from shame. Thou hast stripped thy black citizen of all his rights, and thou hast stained thy robes with lasting infamy, by robbing him of his oath and his God-given prerogative to hold and to have the earnings of his own sweat and toil. We tremble for thee when we think of the great wrong thou hast done, and remember that “justice may sleep awhile, but never dies.” And Oregon, ah, Oregon! The cold and cheerless cliffs of thy rocky mountains, pointing ever to the starried canopy of God’s hollow dome, look indignantly upon thee, and the Pacific’s deep blue waves murmur dolefully as they kiss thy shore, because thou, in thy legislative capacity, hast sought to pollute thy soil with the unpaid toil of the slave!

America has become, by its iniquity in slaveholding, a land of insurrections. Tread on a worm and it will turn; and shall man do less when trodden upon? He will turn, and that turn will, like that of the giants under *Ætnea*, make the lava overflow, and calcine oppressors and their vineyards. But the late movement at Harper’s Ferry was not that of the slaves, their rising was only counted upon after a strong foot hold had been obtained in their midst by those who were their friends. Little did I think on entering America, that such exciting times were near, when the south was to quake with fear on account of a handful of men; little did I think that ere I would leave it again, there would be placed on its escutcheon one other foul blot, in causing to be executed one whose only fault was on virtue’s side, who will ever live in the eyes of many as a martyr and hero.

CHAPTER I.

BROWN—HIS EFFORTS IN KANSAS.

OLD BROWN—John Brown—Captain Brown—as he is variously called, the chief and originator of the insurrection at Harper's Ferry, was born in Terrington, Conecticut, May 9, 1800. He resided for a considerable period of his life in Springfield, Massachusetts; but for some time—perhaps for several years—had lived in the State of New York, somewhere in the vicinity of Utica. He is described as tall, sinewy, and hard featured, with blue eyes and gray hair. He usually dressed in sombre colours and in an antique fashion. He spoke in a measured, decided tone, and never went round Robin Hood's barn, but always straight to the point. His character was irreproachable, for wherever he lived he soon acquired the reputation of a man of the sternest integrity, and his word was considered as good as his bond. His sense of honour, also, was most keen. None can doubt his courage, judging only from the manner he acted at Harper's Ferry; but in Kansas he showed courage of the highest order. At the battle of Osawatomie he went from point to point arranging his men in full view of the enemy, whose whizzing balls he did not mind any more than the buzzing of flies. In Kansas, too, he became a test of the principle of politicians. The more corrupt the man, the more he denounced Old Brown. His compliments were prized as jewels, for he seemed to keep them as if they were (not as if he thought they were however) such, and many prided themselves in being reckoned his friends. No man of unprincipled or doubtful character was admitted into his social circle, and he had a fine religious temperament. He forbade all swearing among his men, and prayed night and morning in his tent. In his public speaking there never was any boasting—he never sought to display himself. He pictured the wrongs of Kansas and the atrocities of slavery in a truly graphic style, declaring that it was nothing to die in a good cause, but an eternal disgrace to sit still in the presence of the barbarities of American slavery. Brown's whole character has been portrayed in these words. He was a Puritan in the Cromwellian sense of the word. He trusted in God, and kept his powder dry.

Like Napoleon, Brown was long in forming the plans which he afterwards acted upon. For 30 years he secretly cherished the idea of being the leader of an insurrection among the slaves; perhaps he thought he was an American Moses, predestined by Omnipotence to lead the nation of slaves in the Southern States of America to freedom: if necessary, through the Red Sea of a civil war or a fiercer war of races. It was

with him a mighty purpose, born of religious convictions, which he nourished in his heart for nearly a life time. When freedom's sky looked gloomy in Kansas, and was getting darker and darker, Brown took leave of his wife and younger children, and, with several of his sons—four or five of them—went out to Kansas. Here is a rare example of heroism in a whole family, and such heroism.

Brown had, then, seven sons and a daughter living. His wife was not only willing to part with him, but also with all who might have been protectors to her, that they might go to chastise vile ruffians who were crucifying the beautiful goddess of liberty in Kansas, not thinking that probably she would not see them again—as she did not ever again behold the full party that left her on the high expedition. Noble woman! worthy of such a man. He reached Kansas, and now thought that the hour was approaching for the work to begin. The ballot-box had already been desecrated; the ruffians of Missouri had overwhelmed the few men of the north, and had done every violence to them. He endeavoured to revive the wasted energies of the north, give her a new spirit, and teach the southerners that men were not thus to be tampered with.

To him, principally is owing that Kansas is now a free state. Brown was not sent by any one, unless by God (as he believed), to vindicate the rights of the north and of freedom in Kansas. He scrupulously abstained from politics, though some have accused him of being a Republican. His first public appearance in the territory was at Osawatimie at a public meeting, at which accommodating politicians were carefully pruning a set of resolutions to suit every shade of free state men. What called him out to the forum was a resolution in favour of excluding all negroes from Kansas. Scarcely controlling his indignation, he rose and boldly asserted the manhood of the negro race, and gave the freest expression to his anti-slavery conviction, with force and vehemence, which threw the greatest consternation among all present. This was his first and last appearance. Like most men of action, he underrated discussion. He had a feeling against even anti-slavery orators. He could "see no use in this talking," he said. "Talking is a national institution, but it does no good for the slave." He thought it an excuse very well adapted for weak men with tender consciences—that most men, who were afraid to fight, and too honest to be silent, deceived themselves that they discharged their duties to the slave by denouncing in fiery words the oppressor. Besides what he did in Kansas, Brown skilfully and safely, without any bloodshed, conducted 11 slaves from Missouri to Canada, where they were beyond the slaveholder's power.

To show Brown's fearless character, and his prudence and promptitude in action, we give the following anecdotes that have been related of him :—

A committee of five called on him on one occasion, and informed him that he must leave the territory in three days, or die, that they would come to his house with a sufficient force at the end of the time, and if they found him still there they would hang him. The old man thanked them for the notice, saying, very coolly, "You will not find me here then, gentlemen." Before the next sun rose the five mem-

bers of that committee were in the other world. Whether Brown killed them or not is unknown but it is certain, had they lived, that they would have killed him, and no man knew that better than he.

On one occasion the well known Henry Clay Pate started out from Wesport, Missouri, with a party of 33 men, full of boastings and promises to catch "Old Brown" and take him a prisoner to Missouri, his only fear being that he would not be able to find him. Brown was very easily found, however, for with 16 men he went out to meet Pate, and after a short fight with a few men killed and wounded, at Black-Jack, near the Santa Fé road, Pate and his party surrendered to "Old Brown," with the exception of a Wyandot Indian by the name of Long, and the notorious Coleman who had murdered a man named Dar. These two men, being well mounted, made their escape.

Upon another occasion, a body of some 220 men were raised and equipped in Jackson County, Mo. and started into Kansas under the command of General Whitfield, to attack and capture him. Brown, who was always vigilant and wary, and was possessed of secret means of intelligence, had made full preparations to meet the Missourians and was encamped with 160 men at a chosen point, near the Santa Fé road which he knew his enemies would pass. He had 50 men with Sharpe's rifles, which would kill at half-a-mile, and which could be loaded at the breech, and fired with great rapidity. These he had had concealed in a ravine, and they were lying down on the ground thus commanding the prairie for a mile before them.

The residue of the party he had concealed in the timber, ready at the proper moment for an attack on the flank of those who might reach the ravine alive. Colonel Sumner, with a squad of dragoons, came down from Port Leavenworth and prevented the fight, disbanding both parties; after which the Colonel was heard to remark that his interposition was a fortunate event for the Missourians, as the arrangements and preparations made by Brown, would have insured their destruction.

Kansas being now in a somewhat peaceful state, Brown sought where else he could be useful in carrying the banner of liberty. All accounts agree that Brown had suffered outrages at the hands of the Border Ruffians, which would have driven any ordinary man mad with the desire of revenge. Without provocation, his buildings had been burned, his family brutally butchered, and he himself hunted from one part of the territory to the other, with a ferocity known only to Missouri Border Ruffians. All of these acts were aided and abetted by James Buchanan, whose sole aim in the administration of Kansas affairs seems to have been the utter and complete extinction of the Free State men. No wonder, then, that Brown conceived the project of carrying the war into Africa, and commenced with capturing a national armoury, situated at Harper's Ferry, though we do not believe that he was actuated otherwise than by the highest feeling of philanthropy—vengeance for what he and his suffered in Kansas was not what prompted him to his last great movement.

CHAPTER II.

THE ALARM AND DESPATCHES ABOUT THE HARPER'S FERRY INSURRECTION.

NOT in the history of the telegraph in America did it carry such startling news as on Monday, Oct. 29, 1859, when it announced to the north that an insurrection of slaves had broken out at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, a small town on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, 81 miles from Baltimore, near the dividing line of Virginia and Maryland, and at the junction of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers. To many it will be interesting to know what were the early despatches, and we give them in full, after which we will cull out the true story of the insurrection:—

Baltimore, October 17.—A despatch just received from Fredericton, and dated this morning, states that an insurrection had broken out at Harper's Ferry, where an armed band of abolitionists have full possession of the government arsenal. The express train going east was twice fired into, and one of the railroad hands, and a negro killed, while they were endeavouring to get the train through the town. The insurrectionists also stopped two men, who had been to town with a load of wheat, and seizing their waggon, loaded it with rifles, and sent them into Maryland.

The insurrectionists number about 250 whites, and were aided by a gang of negroes. At last accounts, fighting was going on. Another account, received by train, says, the bridge across the Potomac was filled with insurgents, all armed. Every light in the town was extinguished, and the hotels closed. All the streets were in possession of the insurgents, and every road and lane leading thereto barricaded and guarded. Men were seen in every quarter with muskets and bayonets, who arrested the citizens, and pressed them into the service, including many negroes. This done, the United States arsenal and government pay-house, in which was said to be a large amount of money, and all the other public works, were seized by the mob. Some were of opinion that the object was entirely plunder, and to rob the government of the funds deposited on Saturday at the pay-house.

During the night the mob made a demand on Wager Hotel for provisions, and enforced the claim by a body of armed men.

The citizens were in a terrible state of alarm, the insurgents having threatened to burn the town.

The following has just been received from Monocacy, this side of Harper's Ferry:—

The mail agent on the western bound train has returned to Monocacy and reports that the train was unable to get through. The train is in possession of the negroes, who arrest every one they can catch and imprison them.

The train due here at 3 P. M. could not get through, and the agent came down on an extra engine. 2.30 P.M.—The western train on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad has just arrived here. Its officers confirm the statement just received touching the disturbances at Harper's Ferry. Their statement is to the effect that the bridge-keeper at Harper's Ferry, perceiving that his lights had been extinguished, went to ascertain the cause, when he was pursued and fired upon by a gang of blacks and whites. Subsequently the train came along, when a coloured man, who acted as assistant to the baggage-master, was shot, receiving a mortal wound, and the conductor, Mr Phelps, was threatened with violence if he attempted to proceed with the train. Feeling uncertain as to the condition of affairs, the conductor waited until after day light before he ventured to proceed, having delayed the train six hours. Mr Phelps says the insurrectionists number 200 blacks and whites, and that they have full possession of the United States armoury. The party is commanded or led by a man named Anderson, who had lately arrived at Harper's Ferry.

Mr Phelps confirms the statement that the insurrectionists had seized a waggon, and loading it with muskets, had despatched it into Maryland. The military of Frederick had been ordered out.

Despatches have been received from President Buchanan ordering out the United States troops at this point, and a special train is now being got ready to convey them to the scene of disturbance. He has also accepted the volunteer services of Captain Senick's Company, of Frederick, and has likewise ordered the government troops from Old Point Comfort to proceed immediately to Harper's Ferry. This intelligence is authentic.

The mail train going west got as far as Sandy, when Mr Hood, the baggage-master, and another party, started on foot to the bridge. They went on the bridge, and were taken and imprisoned, but subsequently went before the Captain of the insurrectionists, who refused to let anything pass.

All of the eastern bound trains, lying west of Harper's Ferry have been taken, persons from this side of the river tying them together, and taking off the slaves. The mail train bound west has returned to Monocacy.

There are from 500 to 700 whites and blacks concerned in the insurrection. The United States Marines at Washington are under orders for Harper's Ferry. There is great excitement in Baltimore, and the military are moving. Several companies are in readiness to take the train, which will leave soon.

4 P.M. An account from Frederick says, a letter has been received there from a merchant at Harper's Ferry, sent by a boy, who had to cross the mountain, and swim the river, which says, that all the principal citizens are imprisoned, and many have been killed; also, that the railroad agent had been shot twice, and that the watchman at the depot had been shot dead.

Washington, October 17, 4 P.M. On the receipt of the intelligence from Harper's Ferry, orders were issued for the companies of military at Old Point, and the corps of marines at the Washington barracks, to proceed thither without delay. The marines, 93 in number, left in the 3.15 P.M.

train, with two 12-pound howitzers, and a full supply of ammunition. It is reported that they are under orders to force the bridge to-night at all hazards. Colonel Faulkner accompanies them.

It is reported, on good authority, that some weeks ago, Secretary Floyd received an anonymous epistle, stating, that about the 15th of October, the abolitionists and negroes, and other dissaffected persons, would make an attempt to seize the arsenal, and hold the place; but the statement was so indefinite and improbable as to cause no fears of such an outbreak.

Baltimore, October 17, 5 P.M. A train filled with military, including the Law Greys, City Guards, Shield Guards, and other companies, left here at 4 o'clock for Harper's Ferry. Representatives of the press accompany the military.

7 P.M. A despatch from Martinsburgh, west of Harper's Ferry, received *via* Wheeling and Pittsburgh, confirms the report that the insurrectionists have possession of the arsenal at Harper's Ferry, and says they have planted cannon at the bridge. All the trains have been stopped. A body of armed men was getting ready to proceed thither to clear the road. There was great excitement at Martinsburgh.

Richmond, October 17. It is reported and believed that the Governor of Virginia has ordered volunteered troops to Harper's Ferry.

9 P.M. There is great excitement here. Company F, with full ranks, has just left the armoury, expecting to take a special train to-night.

This is a new company, with a similar uniform to the Greys. The Greys leave for Harper's Ferry early in the morning. The Governor left to-night for Washington.

Baltimore, October 17, 9 P.M. The American's special reporter telegraphs from Plane No. 4, 45 miles from Baltimore, and 31 from Harper's Ferry, at 8 o'clock, that the train consists of 17 cars, with 400 troops, under Major Reynolds, with a road-master and labourers to repair the track, and telegraphers to mend the line. Three companies from Frederick were in advance train, Colonel Harris, of the U. S. Marines, who commands the expedition, follows in a special train. They will not reach Harper's Ferry before 10 o'clock.

Monocacy Bridge, October 17, 10 P.M. The train arrived here at 9 o'clock. Luther Simpson, baggage master, gives the following particulars:—

"I walked up to the bridge—was stopped, but was afterwards permitted to go up and see the Captain of the insurrectionists. I was taken to the armoury, and saw the Captain, whose name is Bill Smith—was kept prisoner more than one hour; saw from 500 to 600 negroes, all armed. There were from 200 to 300 white men with them. All the houses were closed. I went into a tavern kept by Mr Chambers. Thirty of the inhabitants were collected there, with arms. They said that most of the inhabitants had left, but they declined going, preferring to protect themselves. It was reported that five or six persons had been shot."

Mr Simpson was escorted back over the bridge by six negroes.

The train with the Frederick Military, is lying at Point of Rocks.

A train with the directors of the Pennsylvania Railroad on board, is on the other side of Harper's Ferry.

It was believed that the insurrectionists would leave as soon as it became dark.

Orders have been received here that the train shall stop at Sandy Hook, until Colonel Lee, who is following in a special train, arrives.

There are any numbers of rumours, but nothing certain.

Baltimore, 17th. A report says, that the town at Harper's Ferry has been taken possession of by companies of Charlestown, Shepards-town, Va., and Frederick. The rioters are entrenched in the armoury. They hold Mr Lewis Washington, and Colonel Dangerfield, as prisoners.

The insurrectionists are commanded by Captain Brown, of Kansas notoriety. They numbered originally 17 white men, and 5 negroes, several of them were shot. Two men of the Martinsburgh Company were shot dead whilst charging on the armoury.

A portion of the insurgents have left, under the command of Cook, with a large party of slaves, and are supposed to be moving towards Pennsylvania.

Allen Evans, *alias* Aaron Stevens, one of the insurrectionists, is lying here dying—shot through the heart. He is from Connecticut, but has been in Kansas. He says the whole scheme was got up by Brown, who represented that the negroes would rise by thousands, and Maryland and Virginia, be made Free States. Colonel Shriver, of Frederick, has just had an interview with Brown, in the armoury. He asked to be allowed to march out with his men, and avowed the intention of defending himself to the last.

They are very strongly posted in the engine house, and cannon cannot be used against them, for fear of injuring the prisoners whom they still hold.

Some 16 persons are known to have been killed. Fountain Breckham, railroad agent, was shot dead from the armoury.

Three rioters are lying dead under the bridge, shot by the shepards-town troops, in their charge on the bridge.

Such are the despatches that spread the greatest alarm throughout the north and south. The occasional exaggerated accounts contained in them, may be attributed to the extremely nervous state of those who gave them. Poor Mr Simpson, who saw in the armoury from 500 to 600 negroes, all armed, and from 200 to 300 whites, must have been decidedly the most nervous and frightened of all who were brought into the affair. Although he might not have had an opportunity to count, and considering the circumstances he was in, he might be excused for not thinking about it, yet to mistake 22 men for 800 is beyond everything. We have no doubt that he thought the six negroes who escorted him over the bridge, a regiment. Those who had sympathy for the movement, hoped that these accounts were true, as there would have then been more chance of their holding out, and baffling attempts to dislodge them; but, alas! there were a mere handful of men that sought to achieve a miracle, which turned out to be indeed something worth boasting of, for they caused the American tyrant to tremble in his home.

CHAPTER III.

THE AFFAIR AT HARPER'S FERRY AS IT REALLY WAS.

It was more than a year ago, when Captain Brown, with his two sons, who were now all that remained to him, made his first appearance in Harper's Ferry, under the assumed name of Smith. His ostensible object was to obtain land in the vicinity, and he made investigations as to the probability of finding ores there. After staying but a short time he left the place for several months, and coming into it again, he succeeded in obtaining a farm on a lease. This farm is situated on the Maryland side, about 4 miles from the Ferry. His buying a large number of picks and spades confirmed the belief that he and his sons intended to mine for ores. Though seen frequently in and about Harper's Ferry, they created no suspicions that they had in view its seizure. We may judge that he was now actively making preparations for carrying out his grand idea of exterminating slavery.

John C. Cook, comparatively a young man, who for several years had resided in and near the Ferry, was Brown's chief assistant. He lived for a short time in Kansas, where it is supposed he first became acquainted with Brown, and on his return to the Ferry he married. Though he was considered an abolitionist, his caution in not giving violent expression to his opinions, prevented him exciting suspicion. The remainder of the white men engaged in the insurrection were brought by Brown from a distance, and nearly all of them had been with him in Kansas. Arrangements were now complete for the grand undertaking, and the movement was as follows :—

As William Williamson, the watchman of Harper's Ferry Bridge, was walking across towards the Maryland side, a party of men who said he was their prisoner, and must come with them, seized him, and conducted him to the armoury, which was in the possession of Brown's men. He was, however, only kept till after daylight, and discharged. At midnight, the watchman who was to relieve Williamson found the bridge lights out, and ere he was aware was seized. He succeeded in breaking away and running, supposing that it was from robbers. A party of insurgents were next seen at the house of Col. Lewis Washington, a large farmer and slaveowner, who lived about 4 miles from the Ferry. He was made their prisoner. All the slaves near the house were seized, and a carriage horse and large waggon were taken. They now proceeded, taking Col. Washington along with them, to the house of Mr Allstadt, another large farmer in the same road, and took him and his son, a lad of 16, prisoners, while they reinforced their ranks with all the slaves within reach, and they returned to Harper's Ferry. So quietly all this was done that it created no alarm in the town; but when the day dawned, great was the consternation at finding the bridge guarded by armed men, and a guard stationed at all the avenues, which told the people that they were prisoners. This seems to have caused a panic. In the meantime, a number of workmen had entered the armoury, not

knowing what had occurred, and these were taken prisoners successively. At one time there were not less than 60 men confined in the armoury. Armistead Ball, chief draughtsman of the armoury; Benjamin Mills, master, and J. E. P. Dangerfield, paymaster's clerk, were among the above number. These three were imprisoned in the engine-house, which became the chief fortress of Brown and his party. Like wildfire, the news of the insurrection spread in all directions, and the most exaggerated rumours gained currency. The people of Maryland and Virginia, especially, were in a panic. They thought the slaves, headed by an avenging spirit, had risen *en masse*, and were crying, as they were smiled upon by the shade of one of Virginia's noblest sons, Patrick Henry, "Liberty or death!" They seemed to hear the distant echo of the cry. They were quaking lest the prophetic words of Campbell were then and there coming true—

"Where'er degraded Nature bleeds and pines,
From Guinea's coast to Libya's dreary mines,
Truth shall pervade th' unfathomed darkness there,
And light the dreadful features of despair.
Hark! the stern captive spurns his heavy load,
And asks the image back which heaven bestowed;
Fierce in his eye the fire of freedom burns,
And as the slave departs, the man returns."

Not yet, however, had that time come—it was only a feeble band that had occasioned this great alarm. Troops were now flocking in from both States, and a company of the U. S. marines, under command of Col. Lee, was ordered out by the President of the United States. There was a little skirmishing in the streets, but the main attack was upon the arsenal, where the insurrectionists were entrenched. The cannon were not used, as there would be danger to the safety of Col. Washington, Mr Dangerfield, Mr Ball, and others who were prisoners.

The party inside the arsenal had to pierce the walls and doors of the building in order to use their rifles, and this did not afford them any range; besides, they were shooting almost in the dark. An interest prevailed for the prisoners, and as this was reaching its height, the door of the arsenal was opened, and a flag of truce held out, which was not respected, but preparations for assault were actively made. In the evening, Lieut. J. E. B. Stuart, of the 1st cavalry, who was acting as aid for Col. Lee, advanced to parley with the besieged. Samuel Strichen, bearing a flag of truce, accompanied him. They were received at the door by Capt. Cook. An unconditional surrender was demanded, and only protection from immediate violence and a trial by law were promised, which Brown spurned, as he would accept no terms but those he had previously demanded—"that they should proceed unpursued to the second toll-gate, when they would free their prisoners; the soldiers would then be permitted to pursue them, and they would fight if they could not escape." This was refused, and there remained now nothing but the storming of the place. The signal for attack was given without delay, and the marines, headed by Lieut. Green and Col. Harris, advanced on each side of the door in two lines. Two with heavy sledge hammers attempted to batter down the doors, which swung and swayed, appearing to be secured with a rope, and the spring deadened the

effect of the blows. A ladder, measuring 40 feet, was obtained, and by using it, after a run, against the door, the latter was forced at the second blow, which caused one leaf to fall inward in a slanting position. The marines, headed this time by Major Russel and Lieut. Green, advanced to the breach. The firing from the interior was sharp and quick. With deliberate aim they fired, and made a desperate resistance, which excited the spectators almost to a frenzied state of rage. Another moment and the marines had poured in, the firing ceased, the work was done, and Brown and his gallant party undone. As they were brought out, some dead and others wounded, they were greeted with execrations, and the crowd, nearly every man of which had a gun, with one voice cried out, "Shoot them! shoot them!" The prisoners who had received no injury now appearing, the heart of the multitude turned from cursing to demonstrations of joy. We here subjoin the names of all the insurrectionists—of all except three white men, whom Brown admits he sent away on an errand. We give also the titles under the Provisional Government.

Whites.

General John Brown, commander-in-chief, who was wounded.
 Capt. Oliver Brown, dead.
 Capt. Watson Brown, dead.
 Capt. A. C. Stephens, of Connecticut, wounded.
 Lieut. Edwin Coppie, of Iowa, unhurt.
 Lieut. Albert Hazlett, of Pa, dead.
 Lieut. Wm. Leman, of Maine, dead.
 Capt. John E. Cook, unhurt.

Privates.

Stewart Taylor, of Canada, dead.
 Chas. P. Tidd, of Maine, dead.
 Wm. Thompson, of New York, dead.
 Adolph Thompson, of New York, dead.
 Capt. John Kagi, of Ohio, raised in Virginia, dead.
 Lieut. Jeremiah Anderson, of Indiana, dead.
 With the three whites previously sent off, making 17 whites.

Coloured men.

Dangerfield, newly of Ohio, raised in Virginia, dead.
 Shield Emperor, of Rochester, N. Y., raised in S. C., not wounded, but a prisoner.—The latter was elected a member of the Provisional Government some time since.
 Lewis Leary, of Ohio, raised in Virginia, dead.
 Copeland, of Ohio, raised in Virginia, not wounded, but a prisoner.

Form of Commission.

The commission taken from Capt. Anderson's pocket reads as follows :—

[Number seven]

Greeting.

*Head Quarters, War Department,
 near Harper's Ferry.*

Whereas Jere G. Anderson has been nominated a captain in the army established under the Provisional Constitution—

Now, therefore, in pursuance of the authority vested in us by said constitution, we do hereby appoint and commission the said Jere G. Anderson a captain. Given at the office of the secretary of war, this day, Oct. 15, 1859.

JOHN BROWN, *Commander-in-Chief.*

H. KAGI, *Secretary of War.*

CHAPTER IV.

A SKETCH OF THE PRISONERS BROWN AND STEPHENS, AND A CONVERSATION WITH BROWN.

In order to bring out fully the noble character of Brown, which really appears more admirable the more we know of it, we occupy the present chapter in giving a conversation with the brave man (which took place in the armoury), in which Senator Mason, of Virginia, ex-Member of Congress, Foulkner, of Charlestown, Virginia, and the Hon. Mr Vallandigham, of Ohio, took part, prefacing it with the following sketch of the prisoners :—

“After some little delay, we were introduced into the room where Brown and Stephens lay. We found the former to be a six footer, although, as he lay, he had the appearance of being some six inches shorter than that. He has a rather peculiar shaped head, long gray hair, which at this time was matted, the sabre cut in his head having caused blood to flow freely, to the complete disfigurement of his face, which, like his hands, were begrinned with dirt, evidently the result of continued exposure to the smoke of powder. His eyes are of a pale blue, or perhaps a sharp gray, much such an eye as I remember his brother(?) fillibuster Walker to have. During his conversation, hereafter reported, no sign of weakness was exhibited. In the midst of enemies, whose home he had invaded, wounded and a prisoner, surrounded by a small army of officials, and a more desperate army of angry men, with the gallows staring him full in the face, he lay on the floor, and in reply to every question, gave answers that betokened the spirit that animated him. The language of Governor Wise well expresses his boldness when he said, ‘He is the gamest man I ever saw.’ I believe the worthy executive had hardly expected to see a man so act in such a trying moment.

“Stephens is a fine looking specimen of the *genus-homo*. He is the only one of the lot that I have seen, excepting, of course, the negroes, who had not light hair. His hair and long beard are of a fine black, his face partakes of the handsome and noble, his eye, though restless, has a sharp brilliancy, and he too is a six footer. A stout, strong man, whose condition, lying on the floor, obedient to the last to the commands

of 'my Captain,' as he called him; wounded with three or four gun shot wounds, two in the head and one in the heart, certain of death, I could not but pity. Several hearts grew sad at the recollection of his wife, far away; probably unaware of his sad situation, looking and longing for his return. He, too, shewed a marvellous courage. Ever and anon groaning with excessive pain, he did not, however, forget himself for one instant, but calmly, although in much pain, listened to the conversation as it progressed, on at least one occasion correcting a remark of Brown's.

"Both men seemed prepared for death—seemed to court it rather—perhaps under the idea that they will be acknowledged martyrs, but more possibly under the conviction of having performed a sacred duty. However much the writer hereof may differ from them, there must rise a feeling of respect for them in their bold rashness."

THE CONVERSATION.

Mr Mason. Can you tell us, at least, who furnished money for your expedition?

Mr Brown. I furnished most of it myself. I cannot implicate others. It is my own folly that I have been taken. I could easily have saved myself from it had I exercised my own better judgment, rather than yielded to my feelings.

Mr M. You mean, if you had escaped immediately?

Mr B. No; I had the means to make myself secure without any escape, but I allowed myself to be surrounded by a force by being too tardy.

Mr M. Tardy in getting away?

Mr B. I should have gone away, but I had thirty odd prisoners, whose wives and daughters were in tears for their safety, and I felt for them. Besides, I wanted to allay the fears of those who believed we came here to burn and kill. For this reason, I allowed the train to cross the bridge, and gave them full liberty to pass on. I did it only to spare the feelings of those passengers and their families, and to allay the apprehension that you had got here in your vicinity a band of men who had no regard for life and property, nor any feeling of humanity.

Mr M. But you killed some people passing along the streets quietly.

Mr B. Well, sir, if there was anything of that kind done, it was without my knowledge. Your own citizens, who were my prisoners, will tell you that every possible means were taken to prevent it. I did not allow my men to fire, nor even to return a fire, when there was danger of killing those we regarded as innocent persons, if I could help it. They will tell you that we allowed ourselves to be fired at repeatedly and did not return it.

A Bystander. That is not so. You killed an unarmed man at the corner of the house over there (at the water tank), and another besides.

Mr B. See here, my friend, it is needless to dispute, or contradict the report of your own neighbours who were my prisoners.

Mr M. If you would tell us who sent you here, who provided the means, that would be information of some value.

Mr B. I will answer freely and faithfully about what concerns myself. I will answer anything I can with honour, but not about others.

Mr Vallandigham (Member of Congress from Ohio, who had entered.)
Mr Brown, who sent you here?

Mr B. No man sent me here; it was my own prompting, and that of my Maker, or that of the Devil, whichever you please to ascribe it to. I acknowledge no man in human form.

Mr V. Did you get up the expedition yourself?

Mr B. I did.

Mr V. Did you get up this document that is called a constitution?

Mr B. I did. They are a constitution and ordinances of my own contriving and getting up.

Mr V. How long have you been engaged in this business?

Mr B. From the breaking out of the difficulties in Kansas. Four of my sons had gone there to settle, and they induced me to go. I did not go there to settle, but because of the difficulties.

Mr M. How many are engaged with you in this movement? I ask these questions for our own safety.

Mr B. Any questions that I can honourably answer I will, not otherwise. So far as I am myself concerned, I have told everything truthfully. I value my word, sir.

Mr M. What was your object in coming?

Mr B. We came to free the slaves, and only that.

A Young Man (in the uniform of a volunteer company.) How many men in all had you?

Mr B. I came to Virginia with 18 men only, besides myself.

Volunteer. What in the world did you suppose you could do here in Virginia with that amount of men?

Mr B. Young man, I don't wish to discuss that question here.

Volunteer. You could not do anything.

Mr B. Well, perhaps your ideas and mine on military subjects would differ materially.

Mr M. How do you justify your acts?

Mr B. I think, my friend, you are guilty of a great wrong against God and humanity. I say it without wishing to be offensive, and it would be perfectly right for any one to interfere with you, so far as to free those you willfully and wickedly hold in bondage. I do not say this insultingly.

Mr M. I understand that.

Mr B. I think I did right, and that others will do right who interfere with you at any time and at all times. I hold that the golden rule, "Do unto others as you would that others should do unto you" applies to all who would help others to gain their liberty.

Lieut. Stewart. But you don't believe in the Bible?

Mr B. Certainly I do.

Mr V. Where did your men come from? Did some of them come from Ohio?

Mr B. Some of them.

Mr V. From the Western Reserve? None came from Southern Ohio.

Mr B. Yes, I believe one came from below Stenbenville, down not far from Wheeling.

Mr V. Have you been in Ohio this summer?

Mr B. Yes sir.

Mr V. How lately?

Mr B. I passed through to Pittsburgh on my way in June.

Mr V. Were you at any County or State fair there?

Mr B. I was not; not since June.

Mr M. Did you consider this a military organization, in this paper (the *Constitution*)? I have not yet read it.

Mr B. I did, in some sense. I wish you would give that paper close attention.

Mr M. You considered yourself the Commander-in-Chief of the provisional forces?

Mr B. I was chosen, agreeably to the ordinances of a certain document, Commander-in-Chief of that force.

Mr M. What wages did you offer?

Mr B. None.

Lieut. Stewart. The wages of sin is death.

Mr B. I would not have made such a remark to you, if you had been a prisoner, and wounded, in my hands.

A Bystander. Did you promise a negro in Gettysburg twenty dollars a month?

Mr B. I did not.

Bystander. He said you did.

Mr V. Were you ever in Dayton, Ohio?

Mr B. Yes, I must have been.

Mr V. This summer?

Mr B. No, a year or two since.

Mr M. Does this talking annoy you?

Mr B. Not the least.

Mr V. Have you lived long in Ohio?

Mr B. I went there in 1850. I lived in Summit County, which was then Turnbull County. My native place is New York State; my father lived there till his death in 1805.

Mr V. Do you recollect a man in Ohio named Brown, a noted counterfeiter?

Mr B. I do. I knew him from a boy; his father was Henry Brown; they were of Irish or Scotch descent, and he had a mother also engaged in that business; when boys they could not read or write; they were of a very low family.

Mr V. Have you been in Portage County lately?

Mr B. I was there in June last.

Mr V. When in Cleveland did you attend the fugitive slave law convention there?

Mr B. No. I was there about the time of the sitting of the court to try the Oberlin rescuers. I spoke there publicly on that subject. I spoke of the fugitive slave law and my own rescue. Of course, so far

as I had any influence at all, I was disposed to justify the Oberlin people for rescuing the slave, because I have myself forcibly taken slaves from bondage. I was concerned in taking eleven slaves from Missouri to Canada last winter. I think I spoke in Cleveland before the convention. I do not know that I had any conversation with any of the Oberlin rescuers. I was sick part of the time in Ohio, with ague.

Mr V. Did you see anything of Joshua R. Giddings, there?

Mr B. I did meet him.

Mr V. Did you converse with him?

Mr B. I did. I would not tell you, of course, anything that would implicate Mr Giddings, but I certainly met him and had conversations with him.

Mr V. About that rescue case?

Mr B. Yes, I did; I heard him express his opinions upon it very freely and frankly.

Mr V. Justifying it? that.

Mr B. Yes, sir; I do not compromise him certainly by saying *the A Bystander*. Did you go out to Kansas under the auspices of Emigrant Aid Society?

Mr B. No, sir; I went out under the auspices of John Brown, and nobody else.

Mr V. Will you answer this: Did you talk with Giddings about your expedition here?

Mr B. No, I won't answer that; because a denial of it I would not make, and to make any affirmation of it, I should be a great dunce.

Mr V. Have you had any correspondence with parties at the North on the subject of this movement?

Mr B. I have had correspondence.

A Bystander. Do you consider this a religious movement?

Mr B. It is, in my opinion, the greatest service a man can render to God.

Bystander. Do you consider yourself an instrument in the hands of Providence?

Mr B. I do.

Bystander. Upon what principle do you justify your acts?

Mr B. Upon the golden rule. I pity the poor in bondage that have none to help them; that is why I am here; not to gratify animosity, revenge, or a vindictive spirit. It is my sympathy with the oppressed and the wronged, that are as good as you, and as precious in the sight of God.

Bystander. Certainly. But why take the slaves against their will?

Mr B. I never did.

Bystander. You did in one instance, at least.

Stephens, the other wounded prisoner, here said in a faint, clear voice — "You are right. In one case I know, the negro wanted to go back."

A Bystander. Where did you come from?

Mr S. I lived in Ashtatula County, Ohio.

Mr V. How recently did you leave Ashtatula County?

Mr S. Some months ago. I never resided there any length of time — have been through there.

Mr V. How far did you live from Jefferson?

Mr B. Be cautious, Stephens, about any answers that would commit any friend. I would not answer that.

Stephens turned partially over with a groan of pain, and was silent.

Mr V. (to *Mr B.*) Who are your advisers in this movement?

Mr B. I cannot answer that. I have numerous sympathizers throughout the entire North.

Mr V. In Northern Ohio?

Mr B. No more than any where else; in all the Free States.

Mr V. But you are not personally acquainted in Southern Ohio?

Mr B. Not very much.

Mr V. (to *S.*) Were you at the convention last June?

S. I was.

Mr V. (to *B.*) You made a speech there?

Mr B. I did, Sir.

A Bystander. Did you ever live in Washington city?

Mr B. I did not. I want you to understand, gentlemen, and—(to the reporter of the *Herald*)—you may repeat that, I want you to understand, that I respect the rights of the poorest and weakest of coloured people, oppressed by the slave system, just as much as I do those of the most wealthy and powerful. That is the idea that has moved me, and that alone. We expected no reward, except the satisfaction of endeavouring to do for those in distress and greatly oppressed as we would be done by. The cry of distress of the oppressed is my reason, and the only thing that prompted me to come here.

A Bystander. Why did you do it secretly?

Mr B. Because I thought that necessary to success,—no other reason.

Bystander. And you think that honourable? Have you read Gerrit Smith's last letter?

Mr B. What letter do you mean?

Bystander. The *New Herald* of yesterday, in speaking of this affair, mentions a letter in this way:—"Apropos to this exciting news, we recollect a very significant passage in one of Gerrit Smith's letters, published a month or two ago, in which he speaks of the folly of attempting to strike the shackles off the slaves by the force of moral suasion or legal agitation, and predicts that the next movement made in the direction of negro emancipation would be an insurrection in the South."

Mr B. I have not seen the *New Herald* for several days past; but I presume, from your remarks about the gist of the letter, that I should concur with it. I agree with Mr Smith, that moral suasion is hopeless. I don't think the people of the slave states will ever consider the subject of slavery in its true light till some other argument is resorted to than moral suasion.

Mr V. Did you expect to hold possession, here till then?

Mr B. Well, probably, I had quite a different idea. I do not know that I ought to reveal my plans. I am here a prisoner and wounded, because I foolishly allowed myself to be so. You overrate your strength in supposing I could have been taken if I had not allowed it. I was

too tardy, after commencing the open attack, in delaying my movements through Monday night, and up to the time I was attacked by the government troops. It was all occasioned by my desire to spare the feelings of my prisoners and their families, and the community at large. I had no knowledge of the shooting of the negro (Heywood).

Mr V. What time did you commence your organization in Canada?

Mr B. That occurred about two years ago. If I remember right, it was, I think, in 1858.

Mr V. Who was the secretary?

Mr B. That I would not tell if I recollected, but I do not recollect. I think the officers were elected in May 1858. I may answer incorrectly, but not intentionally. My head is a little confused by wounds, and my memory obscure in dates, &c.

Dr Biggs. Were you in the party at Dr Kennedy's house?

Mr B. I was the head of that party. I occupied the house to mature my plans. I have not been in Baltimore to purchase caps.

Dr Biggs. What was the number of men at Kennedy's?

Mr B. I decline to answer that.

Dr Biggs. Who lanced that woman's neck on the hill?

Mr B. I did. I have sometimes practised in surgery, when I thought it a matter of humanity and necessity, and there was no one else to do it, but have not studied surgery.

Dr Biggs. It was done very well and scientifically. They have been very clever to the neighbours, I am told, and we had no reason to suspect them, except that we could not understand their movements. They were represented as eight or nine persons; on Friday there were thirteen.

Mr B. There were more than that.

Thirteen questions were now put in by almost everybody in the room, as follows:—

Where did you get arms?

I bought them.

In what State?

That he would not tell.

How many guns?

Mr B. Two hundred Sharpe's rifles, and two hundred revolvers,—what is called the Massachusetts arms,—Companies' revolvers a little under the navy size.

Why did you not take that swivel you left in the house?

Mr B. I had no occasion for it. It was given to me a year or two ago.

In Kansas?

Mr B. No. I had nothing given to me in Kansas.

By whom, and in what State?

Mr B. I decline to answer that. It is not probably a swivel; it is a very large rifle on a pivot. The ball is larger than a musket ball. It is intended for a slug.

Brown here made a statement intended for the reporters, as follows:—"If you do not want to converse any more, I will remark to these reporting gentleman, that I claim to be here in carrying out a measure

I believe to be perfectly justifiable, and not to act a part at all incendiary or ruffianly, but, on the contrary, to aid those suffering under a great wrong. I wish to say, furthermore, that now all you people of the south had better prepare yourselves for a settlement of this question. It must come up for settlement sooner than you are prepared for it; and the sooner you commence that preparation, the better for you. You may dispose of me very easy,—I am nearly disposed of now; but this question, I know the end of it is not yet. These wounds were inflicted upon me,—both the sabre cuts in my head and body, and the bayonet stabs in different parts of my body,—some minutes after I had ceased fighting, and consented to surrender for the benefit of others, and not for my own benefit.”

Several persons present denied this statement.

“I believe the Major (pointing to Stewart) would not have been alive but for me. I might have killed him just as easy as I could have killed a mosquito when he came in, but I supposed he came only to receive our surrender. There had been long and loud cries of surrender from us, as loud as men could yell, but in the confusion and excitement, I suppose we were not heard. I do not believe the Major nor any one else wanted to butcher us after we had surrendered.”

An officer here stated that specific orders had been given to the marines not to shoot anybody; but when they were fired upon by Brown’s men, and one of them had been killed and another wounded, they were obliged to return the compliment.

Brown insisted with some warmth that the marines fired first.

An Officer. Why did you not surrender before the attack?

Mr B. I did not think it was my duty or interest to do so. We assured our prisoners that we did not wish to harm them, and that they should be set at liberty. I exercised my best judgment, not believing the people would actually sacrifice their own fellow-creatures. When we offered to let them go upon condition of being allowed to change our position about a quarter of a mile, the prisoners agreed by a vote among themselves. We wanted them only as a sort of guarantee for our own safety, that we should not be fired into. We took them in the first place as hostages to keep them from doing harm. We did kill some when defending ourselves; but I saw no fire except directly in self-defence. Orders were strict not to harm any one not in arms against us.

Brown, suppose you had any negroes in the Free States, what would you do with them?

Mr B. (in a loud tone, and with emphasis). Set them free, Sir.

Your intention was to carry them off, and free them?

Mr B. Not at all.

Bystander. To set them free would sacrifice the life of every man in the community.

Mr. B. I do not think so.

Bystander. I know that. I think you are fanatical.

Mr. B. And I think you are fanatical. “Whom the gods destroy, they first make mad,” and you are mad.

Was your only object to free the negroes?

Mr B. Absolutely, our only object.

Bystander. But you went and took Colonel Washington's silver and watch.

Mr B. Oh yes; we intended freely to have appropriated the property of slaveholders to carry out our object. It was for that and only that. We had no desire to enrich ourselves with any plunder whatever.

Bystander. Did you know Sherod in Kansas? I understand you killed him.

Mr B. I killed no man except in fair fight. I fought at Black Jack Point and Osawatomie, and if I killed anybody it was at one of these places.

CHAPTER V.

THE CAPTURE OF COOK AND HIS COMPANION.

Captain Cook, who has been styled Brown's chief aid, succeeded in escaping to the mountains—in what manner, his confession, which we will hereafter give, tells. He was, however, captured, and his captors, who are named Fitzhugh and Logan, give the following account of it:—

“He had come out of the mountains and asked for some salt meat, and stated, that he had been hunting in the mountains and had got out of provisions. Fitzhugh saw a man called Logan, who is a middling rough kind of a man, and made signs to him to keep with him. Logan let on he had a store up the road, and that he would give him salt meat. Fitzhugh winked at Logan, and whispered, that he believed this was Cook, when Logan put his hand on his shoulder and said, ‘You are my prisoner.’ Logan says, that ‘Cook sprung up like a wire trap.’ He ran his hand into his pocket. Logan being a stout man, caught him by the arm and held him. They had a great deal of difficulty, both of them, to get him down. They then took away his arms. He had a pistol and a campaign knife—which is a knife with a fork and a spoon. The pistol was a five-inch revolver, with six barrels, and finely finished. It was fully loaded and capped.”

The confession we spoke of (and we will only give it in part, as a great deal of it is a repetition of facts already stated, and a confession of things uninteresting to the general reader), was made under the advice of Governor Willard of Indiana, his brother-in-law, with a view to his pardon; consequently, it is not strictly to be relied on:—

“I became acquainted with Captain John Brown in his camp on Middle Creek, Kansas territory, just after the battle Black Jack, and was with him in said camp until it was broken up and his company disbanded by Colonel Sumner of the First Cavalry, United States of

America. I next saw him at the mountain at Topeka, which was on the 4th of July 1856. I next met him some days after in Lawrence. Did not see him again until the fall of 1857, when I met him at the house of E. P. Whitman, about four miles from Lawrence, Kansas territory, which, I think, was about the 1st of November following. I was told that he intended to organise a company for the purpose of putting a stop to the aggressions of the pro-slavery men. I agreed to join him, and was asked if I knew of any other young men, who were reliable, whom I thought would join also. I recommended Richard Realf, L. F. Parsons, and R. J. Hinton. I received a note on the next Sunday morning while at breakfast in the Whitney House, from Captain Brown, requesting me to come up that day, and to bring Realf, Parsons, and Hinton with me. Realf and Hinton were not in town, and therefore, I could not extend to them the invitation. Parsons and myself went and had a long talk with Captain Brown.

"A few days afterwards, I received another note from Captain Brown, which read, as near as I can recollect, as follows:—

‘Date ———.

‘Captain Cook, Dear Sir—You will please get everything ready to join me at Topeka by Monday night next. Come to Mrs Sheridan’s, two miles south of Topeka, and bring your arms, ammunition, clothing, and other articles you may require. Bring Parsons with you if he can get ready in time. Please keep very quiet about the matter.—Yours,
JOHN BROWN.’

“I made all my arrangements for starting at the time appointed. *
* * * * We stopped some days at Tabor, making preparations to start. *Here we found that Captain Brown’s ultimate destination was the State of Virginia.* Some warm words passed between him and myself in regard to the plan, which, I had supposed, was to be entirely confined to Kansas and Missouri. Realf and Parsons were of the same opinions. After a good deal of wrangling, we consented to go on, as we had not the means to return, and the rest of the party were so anxious that we should go with them. At Tabor, we procured teams for the transportation of about 200 Sharp’s Rifles, which had been taken on as far as Tabor one year before, at which place they had been left, awaiting the order of Captain Brown. There was also the stores, consisting of blankets, clothing, boots, ammunition, and about 200 revolvers of the Massachussetts arms patent, all of which we transported across the State of Iowa to Springdale, and from there to Liberty, at which place they were shipped for Ashtabula County, Ohio, where they remained till brought to Chambersburgh, Pa., and were from that transported to a house in Washington County, Maryland, which Captain Brown had rented for six months, and which was situated about five miles from Harper’s Ferry. It was the intention of Captain Brown to sell his teams in Springdale, and with the proceeds to go on with the rest of the company to some place in Ashtabula County, Ohio, where we were to have a good military instruction during the winter. As we could not get cash for the teams, it was decided we should

remain in the neighbourhood of Springdale, and that our instructor, Colonel H. Forbes, should be sent on. * * * * *

“In the meantime, Captain Brown went east on business; but previous to his departure, he had learned that Colonel Forbes had betrayed his plans to some extent. This, together with the scantiness of his friends, induced him to delay the commencement of his work, and was the means, for the time being, of disbanding the party. He also received some information which called for his immediate attention in Kansas. I wished to go with him, but he said I was too well known there, and requested me and some others to go to Harper’s Ferry, Virginia, to see how things were there, and to give information. While we were in Chatham he called a convention, the purpose of which was to make a complete and thorough organization, * * * * * He came to Harper’s Ferry about the last of June, though I did not see him till late in July or the early part of August, when all met on Shenandoah Street, Harper’s Ferry, opposite Learney’s store. I do not know who were his aiders and abettors, but have heard him mention, in connection with the names of Gerrit Smith of New York, Howe of Boston, and Sanborn and Thaddens Hyatt of New York City. What connection, and how far connected with his plan, I do not know, but I know he wrote a letter, a few weeks previous to his attack, to some gentlemen in Boston, which read, as near as I can recollect, as follows:—

‘Date ———.

‘Gentlemen,—I have got nearly all my machines on, and shall be ready to start them in a few days, unless prevented by a special Providence. Everything is working well. I shall want all the funds you promised me in a few days.—Yours truly, CALM AND STILL.’

* * * * * “The attack was made sooner than it was intended, owing to some friends in Boston writing a letter, finding fault with the management of Captain Brown, and what to them, seemed his unnecessary delay. I do not know who those persons were, or how far they were cognizant of his (Captain Brown’s) plan. *But I do know, that Dr Howe gave Captain Brown a breech-loading carbine and a pair of muzzle-loading pistols, all of government manufacture.* * * * *

There were some 6 or 7 in our party who did not know anything of our constitution, and, as I have since understood, were also ignorant of the plan of operations until the Sunday morning previous to the attack. Among this number were Edwin Coppic, Barclay Coppic, Francis J. Merriam, Shields Green, John Copeland, and Leary.

The constitution was read to them by A. D. Stevens, and the oath afterwards administered by Captain Brown. Sunday evening previous to our departure, Captain Brown made his final arrangements for the capture of Harper’s Ferry, and gave to his men their orders. In closing, he said, “*and now, gentlemen, let me press this one thing on your minds, you all know how dear life is to you, and how dear your lives are to your families; and, in remembering that, consider that the lives of others are as dear to them as yours are to you; do not, therefore, take*

the life of any one if you can possibly avoid it ; but, if it is necessary to take life in order to save your own, then make sure work of it."

* * * * *

After going down to the Ferry, I ascended the mountain in order to get a better view of the position of any opportunity.

I saw that our party were completely surrounded ; and I saw a body of men in High Street, firing down upon them—they were about half a mile distant from me. I thought I would draw their fire upon myself ; I therefore raised my rifle and took the best aim I could, and fired. It had the desired effect, for the very instant the party returned it. Several shots were exchanged. The last one fired at me cut a small limb I had hold of just below my hand, and gave me a fall of about 15 feet, by which I was severely bruised, and my feet somewhat lacerated. I descended from the mountain, and passed down the road to the crane on the bank of the canal, about 50 yards from Mr W's store. I saw several heads behind the door-post looking at me ; I took a position behind the brave, and cocked my rifle, beckoned to some of them to come to me ; after some hesitation, one of them approached, and then another, both of them knew me. I asked them if there were any armed men in the store. They pledged me their word and honour there were none. I then passed down to the lock house, and went down to the steps to the lock, where I saw Mr M'Grey, and questioned him in regard to the troops on the other side.

He told me that the bridge was filled by our opponents, and that all our party were dead but 7—that 2 of them were shot while trying to escape across the river. He begged me to leave immediately. After questioning in regard to the position and number of the troops, and from what source he received his information,—I bade him good night, and started up the road at a rapid walk.

I then started up the road toward Captain Brown's house ; I saw a party of men coming up the road ; when within about 50 yards, I ordered them to halt ; they recognised my voice, and called me. I found them to be Charles P. Tidd, Owen Brun, Barclay Coppic, F. J. Merriam, and a negro who belonged to Washington or Alstadtt. They asked me the news, and I gave the information that I received at the canal lock, and on the road. It seemed that they thought it would be sheer madness in them to attempt a rescue of our comrades, and it was finally determined to return to the house of Captain Brown.

Here we got a few articles which would be necessary, and then went over into the timber side of the mountain, a few yards beyond the house, where the spears were kept. Here we lay down and went to sleep. About 3 o'clock in the morning, one of our party awakened, and found that the negro had left us. He immediately aroused the rest of the party, and we concluded to go to the other side of the mountain before light. Here we remained a few hours, and then passed over to the other side of the mountain, where we waited till dark, and then crossed the valley to the other range beyond.

I was commissioned as a Captain on the Sunday of the insurrection, at the same time the others were, and with them took the oath prescribed in article 48 of the constitution. Test. JOHN E. COOK.

CHAPTER VI.

TRIAL OF BROWN AND THE OTHER PRISONERS.

The morning of October 25th was fixed for Brown's trial, there being a manifest desire to hurry it through, in order that the vengeful feelings of the south might be appeased as soon as possible by the news of his conviction, and death-sentence, of which there appeared to have been scarcely any doubt. The indictment charged him with three crimes—treason, inciting slaves to insurrection, and murder; and all of these crimes, in Virginia, are followed with the penalty of death. Some have thought that the offences alleged against him were all within, and constituted one indictment, but it is not our province to argue on this, we having merely to give an account of the trial.

Eight magistrates were on the bench of the court-house of Charlestown, into which, at half-past 10, the prisoners were brought, guarded by 80 men, while around it were stationed guards, whose bayonets glistened on every side. Colonel Devenport was the presiding justice.

Charles B. Hunting, and Andrew Hunter, acted for the prosecution.

Brown, brought in manacled, showed signs of suffering from his wounds. The indictment was now read, and the Court asked if the prisoners had counsel, whereupon Brown spoke as follows:—

“I did not ask for any quarter at the time I was taken; I did not ask to have my life spared. The governor of the State of Virginia, tendered me assurances that I should have a fair trial, but under no circumstances whatever, will I be able to have a fair trial. If you seek my blood, you can have it any moment, without this mockery of a trial. I have had no counsel. I have not been able to advise with any one. I know nothing about the feelings of my fellow-prisoners, and am utterly unable to attend in any way to my own defence. My memory don't serve me—my health is insufficient, although improving. There are mitigating circumstances that I would urge in our favour, if a fair trial is to be had; but if we are to be forced with a mere form, to trial for execution, you might spare yourself that trouble. I am ready for my fate. I beg for no mockery of a trial—no insult; nothing but that which conscience gives, or cowardice desires you to practise. I ask again to be excused from the mockery of a trial. I do not even know what the special design of this examination is; I do not know what is to be the benefit of it to the commonwealth. I have now little further to ask, other than that I may not be foolishly insulted, only as cowardly barbarians insult those who fall into their power.”

The Court here assigned Charles J. Fulkner and Lauson Botts as counsel for the prisoners, to which Brown alone objected, stating that he had sent for counsel, who had not had time to reach him; that he wished for counsel if he was to have a trial, but if only a mock-trial, he cared

not for counsel; it was unnecessary to trouble any gentleman; that he was a stranger there, and knew not the counsel that had been appointed for him, not even their character or disposition, and that he could have counsel of his own, which he had applied for, if he were not hurried to execution before they could reach him; that if this was their disposition they could spare all trouble and expense on his account. Mr Faulkner, before the above statement was made, after a short consultation with Brown, addressed the Court, saying that he could not, under any circumstances, enter upon the defence on so short a notice, as it would be a mockery of justice. Mr Botts on the contrary, did not feel it his duty to decline the appointment of the Court; he was prepared to do his best to defend the prisoners.

A preliminary examination was now conducted, after which the Court remanded the prisoners for trial before the circuit Court, which was held the next day. When everything was ready, the jailor was ordered to bring Brown into Court.

Upon it being found that he was unable to rise from his bed and walk, he was brought in on a cot, which was set down within the bar. The jury were then called and sworn. The following were the test questions :—

Were you at Harper's Ferry on Monday or Tuesday?

How long did you remain there?

Did you witness any of the proceedings for which this party is to be tried?

Did you form or express any opinion from what you saw there with regard to the guilt or innocence of these people?

Would that opinion disqualify you from giving those men a fair trial?

Did you hear any of the evidence in this case before the examining of Court?

What was your opinion based on?

Was it a decided one, or was it one which would yield to evidence, if the evidence was different from what you supposed?

Are you sure you can try this case impartially, from the evidence alone, without reference to anything you have heard or seen of this transaction?

Have you any conscientious scruples against convicting a party of an offence to which the law assigns the punishment of death, merely because that is the penalty assigned.

The Court excluded those who were present at Harper's Ferry during the insurrection and saw the prisoners perpetrating the act for which they are to be tried. The examination was continued until 24 were decided by the Court and the counsel to be competent jurors. Out of these 24 the counsel for the prisoners has a right to strike off 8, and the 12 are drawn by ballot out of the remaining 16. After the judge had charged the jury not to converse upon the case, or permit others to converse with them, Brown arose and said :—

"I do not intend to detain the Court, but barely wish to say, as I have been promised a fair trial, that I am not now in circumstances that will

enable me to attend to a trial, owing to the state of my health. I have a severe wound in the back, or rather in one kidney, which enfeebles me very much ; but I am doing well, and I only ask for a short delay of my trial, and I think I may get able to listen to it ; and I merely ask this, that, as the saying is, ' the devil may have his dues,' no more. I wish to say, further, that my hearing is impaired, and rendered indistinct, in consequence of wounds I have about my head. I cannot hear distinctly at all. I could not hear what the Court has said this morning. I would be glad to hear what is said on my trial, and I am now doing better than I could expect to be under the circumstances. A very short delay would be all I would ask. I do not presume to ask more than a very short delay, so that I may in some degree recover, and be able at least to listen to my trial, and hear what questions are asked of the citizens, and what their answers are. If that could be allowed me, I should feel very much obliged."

The Court refused to postpone its proceedings for reasons that afterwards became evident, and it now adjourned till next morning, when Mr Green on the part of the prisoner, after giving the law applicable to the case, said, that the jury must bear in mind that they are judges of the law and the facts, and that if they have any doubt as to the law or the fact of the guilt of the prisoner, they are to give him the benefit of the doubt. On the first charge of treason, as a specific act of treason must be proven, it must be proven that he attempted to establish a separate and distinct government, and it must also be proven what was purposed of treasonable acts, before you can convict him on those charges. If it is intended to rely on his confession to prove treason, the law distinctly says, " no conviction can be made on confessions, unless made in open court." Here must be sufficient evidence to prove the charge, and it requires two distinct witnesses to prove each and every act of treason. *Second*—Conspiring with slaves to rebel and make insurrection. The jury must be satisfied that such conspiracy was done within the State of Virginia, and within the jurisdiction of the Court. If it was done in Maryland, this Court could not punish the act. If it was done within the limits of the armoury at Harper's Ferry, it was not done within the limits of this State ; the government of the United States holding exclusive jurisdiction within said grounds. Although the jury may doubt about the law on this subject, they must give the prisoner the benefit of the doubt. Over murder, if committed within the limits of the armoury, this Court has no jurisdiction, and in the case of Mr Beckham, if he was killed on the railroad bridge, it was committed within the State of Maryland, which State claims jurisdiction up to the armoury ground. Although he may be guilty of murder, it must be proven that it was deliberate and premeditated murder to make it a capital offence ; if otherwise, it was murder in the second degree, punishable with imprisonment. If you have any doubt on these points, you must give that doubt to the prisoners." A letter was read by Mr Botts, which set forth a plea of insanity for Brown, which he, so far from sanctioning, repudiated, and it was withdrawn. Several witnesses were examined, but nothing more than was already known was elicited. After orders were given to shoot all the prisoners

in the event of an attempt at rescue, the Court adjourned till next day, when Geo. H. Hoyt of Boston, arrived as counsel for Brown. He had first to be admitted a member of the Virginia bar, which, at the suggestion of Mr Hunter, was forthwith done. More witnesses were examined, and some (two for the prosecution) re-examined. The evidence for Brown chiefly related to his conduct in treating his prisoners with lenity, respect, and courtesy, to his flags of truce not being respected by the citizens, and some of his men being shot, thus exciting him to return fire. In the course of the proceedings, Brown arose, and addressing the Court in an excited manner, said that nothing like a fair trial was given to him, notwithstanding all he had said; that witnesses whose names he had given were not there to testify, and that he asked at least until the next morning to have something done. Mr Hoyt, who had been sitting quietly all day at the side of Mr Botts, addressed the Court amid great sensation, stating that he could not undertake the responsibilities of the defence, having no knowledge of the criminal code of Virginia, and no time to read it. He also stated other reasons. Mr Green and Mr Botts withdrew from the case, stating that they had conscientiously done their duty, but were urged to this step on account of the prisoner saying he had no confidence in them.

On October 21, the Court met, and the trial proceeded.

Mr Griswald opened for the defence, contending that Brown could not be guilty of treason, inasmuch as he was not a citizen of Virginia; and as to the charge of levying war against the State, the evidence did not sustain that. He admitted, however, that Brown came to Virginia for the purpose of running away slaves, and for that crime he was answerable to the laws of Virginia. While attempting to carry out that purpose, he took temporary possession of the arsenal at Harper's Ferry, and while here, attempts were made to arrest him, and it was while the prisoner was resisting these attempts that blood was shed and lives taken. This, he contended, was not levying war against the commonwealth, nor could it necessarily constitute levying war, even if murder ensued, because the shedding of blood may not have been contemplated. Mr G. then referred to the constitution of the provisional government found among Brown's papers, which he contended was as harmless an affair as the organisation of a debating or any similar society, which, in this country, are frequently created with all the outside forms and machinery of government. Mr G. further argued, that the jury could not find Brown guilty of treason, unless they find him guilty of associating himself with others to organise a government to overthrow the government of the United States, and not of Virginia; but it was in vague and unmeaning language, which really meant nothing but the repeal of the obnoxious laws of the constitution. As to the charge of conspiring with slaves, no one had testified that Brown, or any one with him, said or did anything to induce slaves to rise in rebellion. Slaves were taken possession of for temporary purposes, and placed in the arsenal; but Col. Washington has testified that no one took part in the matter except Phil, who, at the suggestion of one of the prisoners, attempted to drill a port-hole, and that was done, not for insurrection or rebellion, but to protect themselves. True, they were amenable to pun-

ishment, but not as they were indicted. With regard to murder in the first degree, this involved premeditated murder, but he argued that no such malice had been shewn; guns were fired in all directions, and they fired, or intended to fire, only on armed men. Without excusing their conduct for one moment, he would remark that it refuted the idea of premeditated malice; they had not at the time forethought and reflection which the law allows.

Mr Chilton followed, also for the defence. He went at length into the case by argumentation similar to the above.

Mr Huston now closed the argument for the State. He contended that the code of Virginia defines who are citizens of Virginia, as "all those white persons born in any other State of the domain, who may become resident here." The evidence in this case shows, without a shadow of a question, that when this man came to Virginia, and planted his feet at Harper's Ferry, he came there to reside, and hold the place permanently. It is true that he occupied a farm, four or five miles off, in Maryland, a short time since, but not for the legitimate purpose of establishing his domicile there. It was for the nefarious and hellish purpose of rallying forces into this commonwealth, and establishing himself at Harper's Ferry, as a starting point for a new government. Whatever it was, whether tragical or farcical and ridiculous, as his counsel presented it, his conduct showed, if his declarations were insufficient, that it was not alone for the purpose of carrying off slaves that he came there. His provisional government was a real thing, and no debating society, as his counsel would have us believe, and, in holding office under it and exercising its functions, he was clearly guilty of treason. As to conspiring with slaves and rebels, the law says the prisoners are equally guilty, whether insurrection is made or not. Advice may be given by actions as well as words. When you put pikes in the hands of slaves, and have their master captive, that is advice to slaves to rebel, and punishable with death. The law does not require positive evidence, but only enough to remove every reasonable doubt as to the guilt of the party.

During most of the arguments Brown lay on his back with his eyes closed. Mr Chilton was allowed to give but one instruction to the jury—that they must be satisfied, that the place where the offence was committed was within the boundaries of Jefferson County, after which they retired, when a recess of half-an-hour was taken. Brown sat up as the jury came in, and the verdict which convicted him of treason, advising and conspiring with slaves and other rebels, and murder in the first degree, was rendered, and saying nothing, he lay down quietly, as to a night's repose after a day of pleasant labour, and with fair prospects looming up in his horizon. At that moment he seemed to say, in the words of Emmett, "the blood for which you thirst is not congealed by the artificial terror which surrounds your victim. It circulates warmly and unruffled through channels which you are bound to destroy, for purposes so grievous, that they cry to Heaven." No demonstration followed the verdict—the multitude gazing on, that a little before, outside the Court, were heaping threats and imprecations on his head, was overawed into a strange silence, uninterrupted, during the whole of the time occupied by the forms of the Court.

CHAPTER VII.

TRIAL CONTINUED—BROWN'S SPEECH.

A motion for an arrest of judgment was put in, but not argued, as the counsel, on both sides, were too much exhausted to go on; so it was ordered to stand over until the next morning, and Brown was removed, unsentenced, to prison. At Coppic's trial, which was the next conducted, no witnesses were called for the defence. Mr Harding opened for the commonwealth. Messrs Hoyt & Griswold followed for the defendant, and Mr Hunter closed for the prosecution. Marked ability characterised each of the speeches. After Mr Griswold had given certain instructions to the jury, which the Court allowed him, they retired, and Brown was brought into the thronged Court-house. The motion for arrest of judgment was overruled by the Court, and the Clerk then asked Mr Brown if he had anything to say, why the sentence should not be passed upon him. He immediately rose, and in a clear, distinct voice, said—

“I have, may it please the Court, a few words to say. In the first place, I deny everything, but what I have already admitted, of a design on my part to free slaves. I intended, certainly, to have made a clean thing of that matter, as I did last winter, when I went into Missouri, and there took slaves without the snapping of a gun on either side, moving them through the country, and finally leaving them in Canada. I desired to have done the same thing again on a larger scale. I never did intend murder or treason, or the destruction of property, or to excite or incite slaves to rebellion, or to waken insurrection.

“I have another objection, and that is, that it is unjust that I should suffer such a penalty. Had I interfered in this manner, and which, I admit, has been fairly proved, for I admire the truthfulness and candour of the greater portion of the witnesses who have testified in the case—had I so interfered in behalf of the rich, the powerful, the intelligent, the so-called great, or in behalf of any of their friends, either for the mother, brother, sister, wife, or children, or any of that class, and suffered and sacrificed what I have in this enterprise, it would have been all right. Every man in the Court would have deemed it an act worthy of reward rather than punishment.

“This Court acknowledges, too, as I suppose, the validity of the law of God. I see a book kissed, which, I suppose to be the Bible, or at least, the New Testament, which teaches me, that “all things whatsoever I would that men should do to me, I should do even so to them.” It teaches me further, to “remember them that are in bonds as bound with them.” I endeavoured to act up to that instruction. I say, I am yet too young to understand that God is any respecter of persons. I

believe that, to have interfered as I have done—as I have freely admitted I have done in behalf of his despised poor—I did no wrong, but right.

“Now, if it is deemed necessary that I should forfeit my life for the furtherance of the ends of justice, and mingle my blood further with the blood of my children, and with the blood of millions in this slave country, whose rights are disregarded by wicked, cruel, and unjust enactments, I say, let it be done. Let me say one word further—I feel entirely satisfied with the treatment I have received on my trial. Considering all the circumstance, it has been more generous than I expected, but I feel no consciousness of my guilt. I have stated from the first what was my intention and what was not. I never had any design against the liberty of any person, nor any disposition to commit treason or excite slaves to rebel, or make a general insurrection. I never encouraged any man to do so, but always discouraged any idea of that kind. Let me say, also, in regard to the statements made by some of those who were connected with me. I hear that it has been stated by some of them, that I have induced them to join me, but the contrary is true. I do not say this to injure them, but as regarding their weakness. Not one but joined me of his own accord, and a greater part at their own expense. A number of them I never saw, and never had a word of conversation with till they came to me, and that was done for the purpose I have stated. Now I have done.”

When Brown had finished, after a few preliminary remarks, the judge said that no reasonable doubt could exist of the guilt of the prisoner, and sentenced him to be hung in public, on Friday, the 2d of December. One man alone expressed his joy at this sentence by clapping his hands. In a short time, the jury came in with a verdict that Coppie was guilty in all the counts in the indictment. His counsel gave notice of a motion for arrest of judgment as in Brown's case. The Court then adjourned. The prisoners Green, Copeland and Cook, were tried successively, and convicted. Mr Jennott defended the first two, and took objection to the first count, treason, in the case of Green, alleging that it was not proven that he was a free person, and therefore did not come under the statute, which reads “Any free person, &c.” For Cook, Mr Voorhees delivered a powerful address to the jury, drawing tears from the eyes of the most enlightened of his auditors.

When the prisoners were brought out for sentence, Copeland and Green declined saying anything. Coppie rose and said:—“The charges that have been made against me are not true. I never committed treason against the State of Virginia. I never made war upon it. I never conspired with anybody to induce your slaves to rebel, and I never even exchanged a word with one of your servants. What I came here for, I always told you. It was to run off slaves into a Free State, and liberate them there. This is an offence against your laws, I admit, but I never committed murder. When I escaped to the engine house, and found the Captain and his prisoners surrounded there, I saw no way of deliverance but by fighting a little. If any body was killed on that occasion, it was in fair fight. I have, as I said, committed an offence against your laws, but the punishment for that offence would

be very different from what you are going to inflict on me now. I have no more to say."

Cook now delivered in a hesitating, nervous manner, a speech, which had probably been carefully prepared. He said that he had not come to commit treason or murder, but merely in pursuance of orders from his commander-in-chief, with a design to liberate slaves. After his ineffective speech, Judge Parker pronounced sentence of death in a feeling manner. The day fixed for execution, was the 16th of December. That the result of the trial was pleasing to the south, the following article which appeared in the *Richmond Whig*, shows, and not that it was simply pleasing, but that they also gloated over their victim particularly, and their victims generally.

"Virginia and the south are ready to face all the consequences of the execution of Old Brown and his confederates. Though it convert the whole northern people, without an exception, into furious, armed abolition invaders, yet *Old Brown will be hung!* That is the stern and irreversible decree, not only of the authorities of Virginia, but of the people of Virginia, without a dissenting voice. And therefore, Virginia, and the people of Virginia will treat with the contempt they deserve, all the *craven appeals* of northern men in behalf of Old Brown's pardon. *The miserable old traitor and murderer belongs to the gallows*, and the gallows *will* have its own, in spite of the threatnings and maledictions of the north and the world combined. We took the ground at the outset, that Old Brown should have been hung at once, without the intervention of judge or jury. He was *a villanous pirate and assassin*, and was therefore *entitled to no trial at law*. We believed at the first, and we still more firmly believe now, that it would have been better and wiser in all respects, if Governor Wise had given him the swift benefit of *a drumhead court-martial*. In that event, no sympathy for him would have been excited in the north, for he would have had no opportunity of making *incendiary speeches for effect*, and consequently, nothing of the character of the hero or the martyr would have attached to him, even in the estimation of Garrison and Wendell Phillips. We therefore agree fully with our contemporary of the *Fredericksburgh News*, in the opinion that the absurd and horrid nonsense about Governor Wise's pardoning Old Brown, should be condemned and scouted by every sane man in Virginia and the south.

"The impertinent proposition, come from whom it may, whether northern abolitionists, or northern conservatives, should be resented by Virginia, and by Governor Wise and his friends, as an insult. He cannot pardon Brown; but if he had the power, it would be worse than treason to exercise it.

"The majesty of law, and the outraged sovereignty of Virginia can be vindicated and revenged only by the death of their miscreants. The people already require why they were spared, rebels in arms against the Government, State, and Federals, with hands red with the blood of murdered citizens, summoned to surrender, and refusing, seized at the expense of life, *why were they not shot like dogs* the moment of their capture? All the laws of war, and all the demands of justice, demanded immediate extermination. The impudent claims of a robber, a thief, a horse-t, a chief, and a murderer, to be recognised as a 'prisoner of war,' have hastened his punishment. should h

“ We verily believe the failure to inflict summary and deserved death upon Brown and his co-conspirators will yet cost Virginia many lives. There are fools and fanatics enough ready to risk life to obtain Brown’s notoriety, who would have been deterred by his prompt and immediate execution.”

Such is the feeling of Virginia and the South towards one whose fate has caused tears to flow from the eyes of all the true-hearted in Christendom, and whose character and intention, if not deeds, have made them proud that such a man had lived; who, “thinking only of Him, the Crucified, who treading the wine-press alone, fronted sorrow still deeper,” could thus write from prison :—

*Charlestown, Jefferson County, Valiparaiso,
November 15, 1859.*

REV. H. L. VAILL,—My dear steadfast friend, your most kind and most welcome letter of the 8th instant reached me in due time. I am very grateful for all the good feeling you express, and also for the kind counsels you give, together with your prayers in my behalf. Allow me here to say that, notwithstanding my soul is amongst lions, still I believe that God in very deed is with me. You will not therefore feel surprised when I tell you that I am joyful in all my tribulations; that I do not feel condemned of Him whose judgment is just; nor of my own conscience. Nor do I feel degraded by my imprisonment, my chain, or prospect of the gallows. I have not only been (though utterly unworthy) permitted to suffer affliction with God’s people, but have also had a great many rare opportunities for preaching righteousness in the great congregation. I trust it will not all be lost. The jailor (in whose charge I am) and his family, and his assistants, have all been most kind, and notwithstanding, he was one of the bravest of all who *fought me*, he is *now* being abused for his humanity. So far as my observation goes, none but *brave* men are likely to be humane to a fallen foe. Cowards prove their courage by their ferocity. It may be done in that way with but little risk.

I wish I could write you about a few only of the interesting times I here experience in the different classes of men, clergymen, and many others. Christ, the great captain of *liberty*, as well as of salvation, and who began his mission, as foretold of him, by proclaiming it, saw fit to take from me a sword of steel after I had carried it for a time; but he has put another in my hands (the sword of the Spirit), and I pray God to make me a faithful soldier, wherever He may send me, not less on the scaffold, than when surrounded by warmest sympathisers.

My dear old friend, I do assure you I have not forgotten our last meeting, nor our retrospective look over the route by which God had then led us, and I bless His name that He has again enabled me to hear your words of cheering and comfort at a time when I, at least, am on the “brink of Jordan.”—See *Bunyan’s Pilgrim*. God in infinite mercy grant us soon another meeting on the opposite shore. I have often passed under the rod of Him whom I call Father; and certainly no son ever needed it oftener; and yet I have enjoyed much of life, as I was enabled to discover the secret of this somewhat early. It has been in

making the prosperity and happiness of others *my own* ; as that really I have had a great deal of prosperity. I am very prosperous still, and looking forward to a time when peace on earth and goodwill to men shall everywhere prevail, I have no murmuring thoughts or envious feelings to fret my mind. I'll praise my Maker with my breath.

As I believe most firmly that God reigns, I cannot believe that anything I have *done, suffered, or may yet suffer, will be lost to the cause of God or of humanity*. And before I began my work at Harper's Ferry, I felt assured, that in the *worse event*, it would certainly *pay*. I often expressed that belief, and I can now see no possible cause to alter my mind. I am not, as yet, in the *main*, at all disappointed. I have been a good deal disappointed as it regards *myself* in not keeping up to *my own plans* ; but I now feel entirely reconciled to that event, for God's plan was infinitely better, *no doubt*, or I should have kept to my own. Had Samson kept to his determination of not telling Delilah wherein his great strength lay, he would probably have never overturned the house. I did not tell Delilah, but I was induced to act very *contrary* to my *better judgment*, and I have lost my *two* noble boys, and other friends, if not my *two eyes*.

But "God's will, *not mine*, be done." I feel a comfortable hope that like that erring servant of whom I have just been writing, *even* I may (through infinite mercy in Christ Jesus) yet die in faith. As to both the time and manner of my death, I have but very little on that score, and am able to be (as you exhort) "of good cheer."

I send through you my best wishes to Mrs W ———, and her son, George, and to all dear friends. May the God of the *poor and* the oppressed be the God and Saviour of you all.

Farewell, till we *meet again*,

Your friend in truth,

JOHN BROWN.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE EXECUTION OF JOHN BROWN.

Though various attempts were made to save the gallant hero of Harper's Ferry—not attempts at rescue, save by argument and appeal—they were futile. The Governor of Virginia, though earnestly besought by documents that showed sufficient reason, would not so much as delay the day of execution ; and accordingly, the preparations for the 2d day of December went steadily on. We explain this by assuming that George Wise dared not grant so much though he would ever so

much. On account of Brown being still alive, the South was in a perpetual nightmare, which they thought could only be relieved by his death. From the correspondence of the *New York Tribune*, we gather the following account of the formidable military preparations that were made, and which the Virginians, credulous as all tyrants, caused to be made on account of a report that extensive preparations were being made in the Free States for Brown's rescue. All persons, without exception, were to be rigidly excluded from the execution, and the few strangers who might happen to be in town, were to be closely watched until all was over. The programme for the execution was substantially as follows :—All good citizens were requested to absent themselves from the scene and about the scaffold; the troops, 2000 strong, to form an immense square, with the object of keeping the people beyond the reach of Brown's voice, should he have desired to deliver an *incendiary* speech. The use of the troops was at least a quarter of a million to the Treasury.

The principal excitement of Nov. 26, was caused by the public exhibition, at the sheriff office, of the rope with which Brown was to be hanged. The fact that the rope was made of South Carolina cotton, was pointed out with exultation. Brown, meanwhile, appeared more quiet and thoughtful than before, as if his mind was fixed on his rapidly approaching death. He was perfectly composed and wholly reconciled to his fate, as he had been all along. All applications for passes for civilians to attend within the military lines were refused by the governor, on the ground that it would conflict with the military programme. He said that no civilians could, under any circumstances, be admitted within the military lines, the outer of which would be nearly a mile from the scaffold. Governor Wise stated the cause of this exclusion of all persons other than the military to be, that in the event of an attempted rescue, an order to fire upon the prisoner would be given, and that those within the lines, especially those sufficiently near the gallows to hear what Brown might say, would inevitably share his fate. The preparation for resisting the *enemy*, who never came nor had any existence, were made complete some days before the 2d. Enemy was the only word used in Charlestown when the Northern men were spoken of. Cannon were planted in front of the court house, the jail, and in positions commanding all the main streets. The approaches to the city were also strongly guarded. At Harper's Ferry there were companies of Virginia militia, and United States troops. At Martinsburg there were 300 or 400 soldiers, and elsewhere similar guards had been stationed. The women of Charlestown laboured to provide comforts for the warriors. They sewed bed-ticks, and the soldiers stuffed them with hay, brought in big country waggon. The churches were all taken possession of for barracks.

On Dec. 1st, the arrival at Harper's Ferry of Mrs Brown, created a great sensation. She desired at once to proceed to Charlestown, but the rigours of military discipline were not to be relaxed, and it was determined that her progress and arrival should be made the occasion of the most imposing warlike display that could be made. "At one o'clock, twenty-five of Captain Scott's cavalry corps—the black horse rangers—

surrounded the carriage in which Mrs Brown was to be taken to Charlestown; and with much clashing of arms and glittering display the procession departed. Three hours elapsed, during which the curiosity of the populace swelled near to bursting. At 4 o'clock the return of the cavalcade was announced, and in an instant the road to the jail was thronged with hundreds of eager gazers. For a brief time the way was obstructed, and the carriage and escort paused before the head-quarters of the commander-in-chief, while a body of troops, with much pomp and circumstance, made clear the way, and formed a hollow square reaching from the carriage to the jail. As soon as all was ready, the cavalcade passed on, and through double rows of pointed bayonets, and amid thickly planted pieces of artillery, the grief-stricken woman found her way to the door beyond which her husband, shackled and fettered, awaited her coming. By Captain Howe, who came with her to Harper's Ferry, she was led into the presence of General Talliafero, Sheriff Campbell, Mr Andrew Hunter, and jailor Avis. Here the dreary dignities of formal reception were continued. For 15 minutes stiff platitudes befell her. With singular bad taste, the Commander-in-Chief assured her if she should ever be disposed to visit Virginia again, he would cordially invite her to Charlestown, where she should receive true Southern hospitality. Soon after, she was taken aside by Mrs Avis and searched. The bolts were then withdrawn, and, accompanied by the jailor, Mrs Brown went to meet her husband for the last time.

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General Talliafero, and the other gentlemen constituting the committee of reception, then entered the cell for the purpose of informing Brown that his interview with his wife must of necessity be short. "I hope," said Brown, "that it may be two or three hours." "I do not think," said General Talliafero, "that I can grant so long a time." "Well," answered Brown, "I ask nothing of you, sir; I beg nothing from the State of Virginia. Carry out your orders, General, that is enough, I am content." The interview was, however, allowed to last four hours. Mrs Brown was led into the cell by the jailor. Her husband rose, and, as she entered, received her in his arms. No word was spoken, but a most eloquent silence for some minutes prevailed.

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Mrs Brown observed a chain about the ankles of her husband. To avoid its galling his limbs, he had put on two pairs of woollen socks. Mrs Brown said she was desirous of procuring the chain as a family relic. She had already at her home the one with which the limbs of John Brown, jun., were inhumanly shackled in Kansas, and in which he was goaded on by the border devils until he was mad, and the chain had worn through his flesh to the bone; and this too, she desired. Captain Brown said he had himself asked that it be given to his family, and had been refused.

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Mrs Brown was escorted back to the Ferry at 9 o'clock, there to await the reception of her husband's body.

We have now a scene in the history of John Brown to record,

and we cannot do better than give it in the graphic language of a correspondent of the *New York Tribune*, who witnessed it:—

“The scaffold is approached. He alights from the waggon and ascends to the platform, which last sustains Old John Brown alive. There is no faltering in his step, but firmly and erect he stands amid the almost breathless lines of soldiery that surround him. With a graceful motion of his pinioned right arm, he takes the slouched hat from his head, and carelessly casts it upon the platform by his side. The cap is drawn over his eyes, and the rope adjusted about his neck. John Brown is ready to meet his God. But what next? The military have yet to go through some senseless evolutions, and near ten minutes elapse before General Talliafero’s chivalrous hosts are in their proper position, during which time John Brown stands with the cap drawn over his head, and the hangman’s knot under his ear. Each moment seemed an hour, and some of the people unable to restrain an expression of their sense of the outrage, murmur “Shame! shame!” At last, the Virginia troops are arranged *a la mode*. “Captain Brown, you are not standing on the drop, will you come forward?” said the Sheriff. “I can’t see gentlemen,” was the reply, “you must lead me.” The Sheriff led his prisoner forward to the centre of the drop. “Shall I give you a handkerchief, and let you drop it as a signal?” inquired the Sheriff. “No; I am ready at any time, but don’t keep me waiting needlessly,” was the reply. A moment after, the Sheriff springs the latch—the drop falls—and the body of John Brown is suspended between heaven and earth. A few convulsive twitchings of the arms are observed. These cease after a moment, John Brown is dead.

“The majesty of Virginia law, and the exactions of Virginia vengeance are now satisfied, but time alone will tell whether Virginia peace will be conserved by it.”

CHAPTER IX.

THE LAST SCENE OF THE DRAMA.

Perhaps many have seen enough of this painful drama; but there are, doubtless, others who still have nerve to witness another and the last scene, the most solemn of all. Brown’s body, after remaining suspended 38 minutes, is taken down and placed in a coffin. As we gaze for a moment, ere the lid is adjusted, on his countenance, scarcely marred by death, we see plainly written in his features the declaration contained in his last words: “I die alone responsible for my own operations, and ask for no sympathy. I am satisfied in my

own belief—but desire no other man to believe as I do, unless his conscience and philosophy approve. I am singly responsible for my own acts, good or bad. If right or wrong, the consequences rest only upon myself.” The mortal remains are now given up to his grief-stricken widow, who at once proceeds with them to the North, stopping not to see the satisfied expression that is on every Southern face. Philadelphia is reached; and here, as the coffin is moved along in a covered waggon, a great crowd of people follows it even to the steamboat landing—some weeping bitterly, others with but a tear glistening in their eyes, yet showing, by a visible tremor of their frame, great emotion, in now fully realizing the fate of one of whom they would ever have a hallowed memory for his goodness and greatness. A little ploughing of water and puffing of steam and New York is reached. Here is met not the tearful crowd, silent and inactive, but one anxious to behold that countenance which, in life, possessed nearly the virtue of the Medusa’s head, with respect to tyrants. The place whither the coffin was secretly conveyed, to be kept, undisturbed, until the journey could be proceeded with, the day being Sunday, is not long in being found out by the curious; nor does the sacredness of the day prevent them making strong efforts to gain admittance to view the body. At length they are dispersed by the police; and now the lid is removed for the benefit of a few, and we again see features that would have been recognised as those of the martyred John Brown by any one who had seen his photograph—not in the least distorted, wearing a calm expression as of one asleep. New York is left behind, and Albany is soon gained by the small grief-worn party that accompanied the body of the much-lamented Brown. The aspect of things is getting more and more solemn. This is evident from the lack of excitement that was found everywhere on the route. One other stage is reached—the last—North Elba, the place destined for the funeral, the performing of the last rights towards the departed.

Behold in that church-yard an open grave. That is the assigned place, and now towards it is borne, in slow steps, the coffin containing the body, while there follow in solemn procession the mourners, with a chief, whose sorrow seems for a moment to swallow up that of the rest. They form around the grave, and the service commences amid unstifled sobs. As it proceeds, grief is poured out more abundantly. It is nearly ended, and the coffin is being lowered. A loud moan tells that one no longer can help giving vent to wild emotion. And who is she that thus takes precedence of the rest in lamenting for him whom all lament? It is his widow—she feels her sacred right.

In the brief moment occupied in lowering the coffin, many, so wonderful in its power is the human mind, take a survey of the life of him whose funeral they attend.

They see him first in childhood, dreaming of striking off the fetters of the slaves, and next in manhood, with brawny arm actually doing so. They see him planning an attack on Harper’s Ferry, and next behold him invading the South, with the bold purpose to take it. They see him succeed, and witness his defeat. They behold him

through those long days of trial, bearing up, though mutilated with wounds, resigned, faithful to his cause, still trusting in God. They see him receive his death sentence as a martyr only can, without fear, without uttering a word of reproach against his enemies, trusting in One who would turn it into a sentence of eternal life. They behold him next on the scaffold, still resigned, and then shut their eyes that they may not see his death struggles. They now are brought to themselves by the dull sound of his coffin striking the depth of the grave. The ceremony becomes painful as it nears the close. The minister grasps a handful of earth, and it is heard falling on the top of the coffin, and rattling down the sides as he pronounces, in a quivering voice, the solemn words "dust to dust and ashes to ashes, this is the way of all flesh." A benediction is not all, for many a tremulous hand seizes a bit of earth and throws it into the grave as a last farewell to one who no longer is in the land of the living, whose thorny path, that had for a life time been cheered by the sun of inward consciousness of acting rightly, regardless of risk, eventually had brought him to the gates of eternal rest.

CHAPTER X.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

Madame Roland, while being carted to the guillotine, exclaimed, "Liberty, what crimes are done in thy name!" Ridiculous and absurd as it appears to us, the people of the South hold slaves in the name of liberty, and Brown was executed by Virginia, because he sought to abridge the liberty of her citizens in attempting to prevent them from holding slaves. Slavery, like all tyrants, lives in a constant alarm, and it is fear for the stability of his throne that goads him on to commit many crimes. He dwells in a castle, which he has in vain tried to render impregnable. In vain has he dug trenches around it, and placed sentinels wherever he thought they would be most useful; a foe always finds means to attack it, and deceive the vigilance he has established. Even his castle gates were passed by Brown, the audacious hero, and one dreary morning he was awakened out of a troubled sleep, and startled with the overwhelming news that an enemy had got within the very walls of his castle, and had entrenched himself in one of the armouries. How that tyrant's knees did quake for a while! He imagined all sorts of horrors, even the knife at his throat, and the ball in his heart, while his men were capturing the intruder; and after that was done, he could not rest until he saw the conspirator, robber, and assassin, as he called him, dangling on a gallows, which sight has ever since, and probably ever

will haunt him. Conscience, whose still small voice may be hushed amid the tumult of the evil passions raging in the bosom, will, at a moment little dreamed of, aided by some circumstance, be heard above them all; but no longer is it a monitor, it is now a judge passing a sentence more severe than of death. We have narrated the circumstance that gave voice to the tyrant slavery's conscience, and are sorry to add further, that it was scoffed at, and treated with contempt and scorn, for by redoubling vigilance and caution, he thinks he can yet make his castle a safe place of residence. And now a word about Brown. To achieve everything he wished in reference to the condition of his down-trodden fellow mortals, he was the *man*; but October 16, 1859, was not *the hour*. This is the reason he was not successful. And why was that not the hour? His plans were not mature enough; he had not taken time to gather sufficient forces, nor to collect resources. He had not wherewith, in short, to carry out his deep plot. But on the other hand he did not make quite a failure. He set the North in more direct antagonism to the South—opened the eyes of the South to its true state, causing it to adopt measures for its security, which are calculated to open wider the breach between it and the North, and thus operate against itself. He also infused into many, an anti-slavery spirit which they had not before, and incited others to direct and immediate action against the 'peculiar institution.'

The character of Brown gives a gloss to his deeds that will not fail to attract to them the eyes of posterity. That he had numerous sympathisers in the North, was proved on the day of his execution; for while the tragical event was occurring at Charlestown, others of a far different character were happening in nearly every northern city. Meetings of sympathy and prayer were held, when the impressiveness of the occasion was manifested in tears and sobs and groanings of spirit. In Philadelphia, at a large meeting held in its largest hall, when the hour arrived that had been appointed for the execution, a bell was rung. As the death knell fell upon the ears of the multitude of four thousand, the heart of each seemed to sink with a mighty load; and solemn, grief-stricken countenances, indicated the greatest sympathies for him whose thread of life had just been cut by impious hands. Who after reading these statements will say Brown has failed?—or who will not say that Virginia has not failed in her attempt to render his death ignominious?

It is not the scaffold, it is the crime that dishonours the man. Brown to every sane person with a heart says in the emphatic language of Burke, "The only charge against me is, that I have pushed the principles of benevolence and justice too far—farther than a cautious policy would warrant, and farther than the opinions of many would go along with me."

Of those brave heroic men who have at various times risen almost from obscurity, to take prominent rank in an army, having freedom as its watch-word, none perhaps deserve more praise than does John Brown of Osawatimie. Wallace, Tell, L'Ouverture, and Washington, have all received much of deserved eulogy, and their

names have justly been rendered gloriously immortal in the annals of history, and by tradition for their devotion to the great cause of liberty; but on the occasion when each figured, it was peculiarly his own cause; which prevents their labours from appearing so disinterested as those of Brown. They were patriots—he was more; he was a philanthropist and reformer. His fate and the way he met it, throw another halo of glory around his memory, for he was a martyr—a sacrifice offered up on the altar of slavery. But though dead, he still lives and ever will—to give a constant alarm to the consciences of his assassins—to incite others to the great work which it was the chief object of his life to accomplish. He has established a school of anti-slavery philosophy, which will, as long as there is need, be zealously supported.

